

CALL THE BALL

VOL.2 NO.57

The Newsletter of the 130th Composite Squadron

SEPY 2003

Schedule of Activity for - SEPT 2003

1st Week

2nd week

**MORAL LEADERSHIP
SAFETY**

3rd week

**AERO ED
PT and OPEN TEST**

4th week

**"GUESTS (Tentative)
* FIELD TRIP?**

**CONTACT LT ANDERSON(s) to get a copy of
our current schedual**

UNIFORM OF THE DAY 1 & 3rd weeks BDU — 2 & 4th BLUES!



Commanders Corner

Just a reminder that we are working the flight line at the Faribault Airport on 13 and 14 September. If you can help PLEASE contact Major Craswell ASAP. This is a very important project for we are picking up the reins from one of our sister squadrons in group 4. We are being funded for this activity and it is doubly important that you participate! Some flight line marshalling will be done as well as walking the flight line to insure the aircraft are not damaged by the visitors. It

will be an awesome sight to see various aircraft of the conventional AND lighter than air variety. This month I want to nominate my favorite CAP web page. It's <http://www.cadetstuff.org/> And while it's dedicated to Civil Air Patrol Cadets it has a number of features of interest to members young and old.

The Communications Corner.

This month we are highlighting the world of communications. Radio is **the voice of command**, or so goes the motto of the Communications folks in Civil Air Patrol. With the glut of cellular phones many of us are looking at our communications equipment and wondering if we may see a day when it becomes obsolete. That day may come but not anytime soon. During a disaster the cell phone system has two major flaws. One is that it is not designed for all it users to start using it at once. It assumes a small percentage of folks owning cells will be on it at any given time. Thus during anyone of many disasters where people all at once call home the cell system fails to provide dial tone or it hangs up on its subscribers. Height is important so many powerful cells are located on high locations. Unfortunately for New Yorkers a number of Cell towers were atop the world trade center. During several disasters the control of the phones was artificially turned off. Thus regular subscribers we not allowed to place or receive calls so that city officials, fire and police would still have a working system they could rely on. An issue that has confronted me personally is the lack of coverage in certain rural areas. During SAR (Search and Rescue) mission where we discovered an airplane crash cell phone reception was nil. Ditto coverage on the VHF repeater! However we were fortunate to have a member from another unit who COULD hear

us relay our traffic to the St Paul repeater.

Civil Air Patrol communications is on a variety of radio bands and use a number of modes. For those of you who are Citizens Bands buff one of the CAP radio channels was located under CB channel one. The mode (Like CB of it's day) was AM phone. There are still some units that have a few sets of CB walkie talkies with this channel crystaled up. The amazing part of this is that anyone can use it! CB operators long ago figured out how to cheat (or pirate) and get on unauthorized channels. Bringing with them the 10-4 good buddies, off key singing, turkey sounders and other nonsense. Use of this frequency is discouraged because of the number of insane people who might monitor or interfere with CAP comms. A lower down the band is HF (or Short Wave) Single Side Band) Like the Short-wave broadcast services these transmissions can bounce all over the USA and even into foreign countries. In the old days (Say around WWII days) these were the only frequencies available and CAP members were not only expected to know proper voice procedure but many had to be able to handle messages in Morse Code! While there is no longer a need for Morse code the use of Shortwave (Or HF/High Frequency) is still important. Region wide disasters have the capability of disrupting communications. Many of the agencies we serve are able to communicate with us on HF radio. These include (but are not limited to) FEMA, SHARES, The MARS (Military Affiliate Radio System) and in a real pinch the Amateur Radio (Ham) operators. Operation on HF is still a hit and miss sort of thing with no true ability to know that signals sent from one point will reach another. Time of day, sunspot cycles, Skip zones make HF operation more of an Art than a science. The most popular band of frequencies for CAP use is the VHF range. Above and below the 2 Meter Ham Radio band CAP conducts most of it's radio communications. VHF is primarily line of site. That means that signals in your area tend to go slightly further than you can see from a high location. This range can be extended by using radio relays (Either mechanical and automatic or manual. i.e. a voice relay from one station to the other with a third party repeating communication "in between." CAP has a nationwide series of automatic relays known as "Repeaters" which are located at high points such as tops of mountains or buildings. CAP goes this one further with an airborne repeater and the famous "Highbird" which is an aircraft dedicated to the manual relay of communications. Short range VHF Handhelds can be relayed a considerable distance with a repeater, Airborne or not or a SAR Highbird.

Getting Radio-Active.

In the olden days much of the CAP radio equipment was re-wired Ham Radio gear. In the last few years new regulations have sent 90%+ of our radio gear to the scrap heap. And while there are some serious political issues we must leave those to other to argue for as a member of an Emergency Services Teams we must focus on getting wired up and ready to communicate. CAP members should probably not consider buying HF equipment for it's use is very infrequent and good portable units are extremely expensive. VHF sets can also be pricey for any gear we use must meet NTIA specs. Members who are interested in owning a radio that can be used on CAP channels should point their internet browsers to <https://ntc.cap.af.mil> This is the Na-

tional Communication page and will list the certified HF and VHF radio sets. Some of the popular units include Icom, Vertex (Also known as Yeasu) Tait and others. The ability to program the radio for different channels is a plus. Low power settings can come in handy for they extend the battery life and since we need next to nothing in power to talk to our Highbirds it comes in handy. However it's worth noting that these radios are NOT cheap. We are buying the best of the Commercial radios and when you do that price is not normally the objective. Some members have been purchasing FRS or GMRS radios. Until very recently these radios were banned for ANY use by CAP members. It was felt that as members of the Air Force Auxiliary we were "federal users" and not allowed to use these services. These rules have been lifted somewhat. The main point is that FRS radios may not be used for critical use communications. Things such as Emergency Services missions and so forth. I guess the thinking is that there are just too many other folks with these radios and harmful interference is too likely to occur. In the past I've tried to discourage members from purchasing these radios for they were fairly expensive and not really very useful. Just this week I saw a sale of Radio Shack radios called Genex for \$19.95 a piece. A family could buy several of these radios for home use and during "some" cap activities use it. In the meantime we are hoping to secure some grant money to purchase some proper VHF radios.

New CAP internet site totally rewritten. Check it out at <http://www.cap.gov/>

Online uniforms sales.

As many of our members have become familiar with the old CAP bookstore I think it is worth noting that the new online CAPMART replaces the old bookstore and it is pretty easy to use. What continues to surprise me is that the old Hock Shop is still in there swinging with some excellent prices and very prompt service. Check out both of them if you are in need of some patches or equipment items. <http://www.thehock.com/> and <http://www.capmart.org/> My last purchases had the old Hock still lower in price btw!

Membership info on line!

Member Photos are now being stored on the CAP member webpage. Direct your browser to <https://www.capnhq.gov/default.asp> where you can set up your own account and enter your Picture and read out various member data. In addition the implementation of the MIMs system will allow you to print out your own 101 card eliminating some of the paper shuffling that makes this task a chore.

Tuning in!

If you are not subscribed to RADS and CAP announcements get with it! Click <https://www.mnwg.cap.gov> and select the MAILING LISTS button. Click SUBSCRIBE (No CHARGE) and decide which messages you want to automatically receive. As a minimum select North Central Region Traffic (NCR), MN Wing RADS (RADS), Announcements, Group 4 and 130th Squadron.

Open challenge! Are you up for it?

The Stillwater Amateur Radio Association will host the third annual foxhunt challenge on Saturday September 20, 2003. All amateur radio clubs in Eastern Minnesota and Western Wisconsin are CHALLENGED to be the first to locate a hidden transmitter (the FOX) using radio direction finding (RDF) equipment and techniques. The REWARD will be the coveted S.A.R.A. FOX HUNT TROPHY (engraved with the name of the winning club) AND getting your success documented with photos in a QST submission!

WHAT: Hidden transmitter hunt.

WHEN: Saturday September 20st 2003 From 9:00 am Until...

WHERE: The FOX will be hidden somewhere in the region defined by the Stillwater and White Bear Lake East Quadrangle U.S.G.S. section maps.

HOAH! CAP RANGER

So, someone from your squadron just came back from Hawk and is quacking about getting his "R-3" or "R-2" and working his way up to Advanced. What the heck does all that mean? What is an "Advanced" Ranger capable of? Are we talking one step down from an Air Force Pararescueman or are we talking two steps above a Cub Master? Well, with this handy, dandy guide from C/Maj Beth Roxby, you too will know the difference between R-3 and so on and so forth. And you thought you could trust that R-2 with a compass? You fool!

R-3 - Ranger Third Class. Knows what a fire is. Cannot tie his boots by himself. Is afraid to open folding knife at Wal-Mart. Gets lost looking for his mom's car in Wal-Mart parking lot. Holds flashlight while R-1 reads map. Manages to pick his home squadron's ground team leader out of a line-up two out of three times. Brings a mop to social events because he could not get a date.

R-2 - Ranger Second Class. Knows that a fire is hot (and will wear a glove next time). Can tie his boots once shown the proper method by a staff cadet. Cuts himself on really big knife he just bought and will never use. Gets lost on first nav course - and on second nav course, and third nav course... Is learning to read a road map. Is glad someone else leads his squadron's ground team. Dates outside of CAP because Rangers of the opposite sex frighten him.

R-1 - Ranger First Class. Knows how to start a fire in fifteen minutes. Can tie a taut-line hitch to keep his tent from falling in on him. Cuts himself with survival knife while skinning rabbit. Gets 'temporarily misdirected' at orienteering competition, but secretly shares information with another team to get back on track. Confuses latitude and longitude lines. Leads ground team at his home squadron because no one else will do it. Dates other Rangers only because he spends too much time at Ranger activities to meet people in the real world.

R-Adv - Advanced Ranger. Knows how to start a fire in the rain. Can tie three versions of the figure eight knot that he knows no use for. Uses knife to pry open cans of sterno. Proficient using lensatic compass in the field, but is still mystified by the "magic box that talks to metal birds". Teaches R-3s to read topo maps knowing they will forget everything he teaches within five minutes. Leads his home squadron's ground team to victory at the Ranger competition (or would have if that other Ranger team hadn't 'bent the rules'). Just broke up with a Ranger and vows never to date one again.

R-Ex - Expert Ranger. Starts fires with his breath. Builds a 12-to-1 haul system using paracord and his teeth. Can kill a bear from thirty feet away by throwing a screwdriver. Has memorized every topographical feature within fifty miles of Hawk Mountain and twenty miles of his home squadron. Has a GPS receiver in his skull. Accepts bribes to lead other squadrons' teams at Ranger competition. Is in a long-term relationship with or has married a Ranger and is planning on sending all of his children through Ranger School.

**STUDY, TEST, PT, DRILL, MORAL LEADERSHIP-> PROMOTE
And do it again!
Any questions?**

<http://www.mnwg.cap.gov/130th> * * * Email Major Craswell jjc@integraonline.com